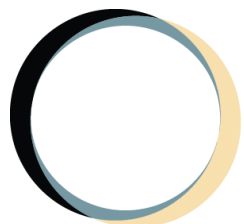




Gaithersburg, MD

Trends over Time

2015



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Summary

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The NCS communities. The NCS captures residents' opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central facets of community (Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement). This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2015 ratings for the City of Gaithersburg to its previous survey results in 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Gaithersburg represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines. Deviations from stable trends over time, especially, represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs or public information may have affected residents' opinions.

Meaningful differences between survey years have been noted within the following tables as being "higher" or "lower" if the differences are greater than nine percentage points between the 2013 and 2015 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2013 and 2015 are noted as being "similar." Additionally, benchmark comparisons for all survey years are presented for reference. Changes in the benchmark comparison over time can be impacted by various trends, including varying survey cycles for the individual communities that comprise the benchmarks, regional and national economic or other events, as well as emerging survey methodologies.

Overall, ratings in Gaithersburg for 2015 generally remained stable. Of the 120 items for which comparisons were available, 107 items were rated similarly in 2013 and 2015, 10 items showed a decrease in ratings and three showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Most of the General Community Characteristics remained stable over time; however the rating for Gaithersburg as a place to retire decreased in 2015 compared to 2013, but was similar to 2007 and 2009 ratings.
- Aspects related to Mobility across the pillars of Community Characteristics and Governance saw the most declines in ratings in 2015 compared to 2013. The aspects include traffic enforcement, street repair, snow removal and traffic flow.
- Within Recreation and Wellness the quality of recreation centers declined in 2015 compared to 2013 as well as the rate in which residents used recreation centers.
- Fewer residents reported they attended a City-sponsored event, voted in local elections or watched a local public meeting in 2015 compared to 2013; however, more felt the economy would have a positive impact on their income.
- Within the facet of Community Engagement, the ratings for opportunities to volunteer and social events and activities increased in 2015 compared to 2013.

The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Overall quality of life	75%	73%	80%	80%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	67%	64%	75%	73%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to live	82%	84%	89%	85%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	72%	73%	78%	82%	80%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	74%	66%	77%	77%	81%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to retire	48%	50%	59%	60%	47%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
Overall appearance	78%	72%	82%	72%	71%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar

Figure 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	NA	68%	74%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	86%	93%	90%	90%	91%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	75%	78%	79%	83%	83%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	NA	75%	80%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	NA	53%	64%	64%	62%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	53%	59%	69%	62%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	47%	35%	61%	52%	53%	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	NA	NA	63%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Higher
	Travel by car	47%	62%	66%	73%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	NA	65%	66%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	25%	NA	48%	57%	47%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Overall natural environment	NA	68%	81%	76%	80%	Similar	NA	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	NA	NA	NA	73%	74%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Air quality	73%	62%	85%	69%	72%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	NA	72%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	New development in Gaithersburg	67%	71%	79%	62%	66%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	27%	33%	44%	46%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	NA	NA	60%	66%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	NA	64%	67%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	NA	61%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	NA	45%	48%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
	Business and services	NA	NA	75%	60%	61%	Similar	NA	NA	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	NA	33%	35%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	79%	72%	76%	68%	68%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Employment opportunities	48%	52%	55%	43%	47%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	NA	47%	51%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Similar
	Place to work	70%	71%	73%	71%	71%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	NA	76%	77%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Mental health care	NA	NA	NA	61%	61%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Higher
	Preventive health services	NA	NA	69%	68%	70%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Health care	47%	52%	68%	69%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Food	NA	NA	79%	69%	70%	Similar	NA	NA	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	75%	65%	77%	68%	72%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	NA	70%	70%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Similar
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	NA	NA	81%	78%	73%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	63%	64%	71%	62%	63%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	NA	NA	NA	71%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	NA	NA	NA	81%	76%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Child care/preschool	NA	NA	53%	69%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Higher	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	NA	67%	71%	50%	61%	Higher	NA	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Neighborliness	NA	NA	NA	50%	55%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	69%	74%	81%	66%	74%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	NA	72%	56%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	NA	NA	83%	54%	68%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar

The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Services provided by Gaithersburg	77%	78%	88%	81%	76%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Customer service	80%	77%	88%	75%	73%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	63%	55%	61%	57%	58%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	66%	55%	74%	62%	60%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	66%	65%	63%	48%	56%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	NA	64%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Gaithersburg	NA	NA	NA	69%	62%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	NA	65%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	NA	70%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	46%	53%	71%	57%	55%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher

Figure 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Safety	Police	83%	81%	84%	87%	82%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	60%	67%	65%	74%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	74%	73%	83%	74%	73%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	NA	NA	65%	69%	66%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Traffic enforcement	58%	72%	77%	80%	68%	Lower	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	65%	61%	67%	69%	58%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Street cleaning	69%	75%	77%	75%	72%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Street lighting	65%	62%	69%	73%	71%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	60%	73%	69%	80%	70%	Lower	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher	Similar
Mobility	Sidewalk maintenance	65%	67%	75%	74%	68%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Natural Environment	Recycling	82%	89%	85%	89%	85%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
	Yard waste pick-up	78%	85%	83%	81%	79%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	NA	62%	61%	61%	57%	Similar	NA	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Open space	NA	NA	NA	53%	61%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Similar
Built Environment	Storm drainage	76%	75%	79%	75%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	53%	48%	74%	53%	55%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	69%	62%	74%	59%	58%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Cable television	48%	56%	NA	57%	52%	Similar	Lower	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	67%	54%	69%	56%	61%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	81%	86%	85%	86%	81%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	77%	82%	86%	79%	75%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	75%	77%	81%	85%	72%	Lower	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	NA	66%	70%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	61%	68%	67%	69%	67%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar

Figure 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Sense of community	63%	64%	71%	54%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Gaithersburg	NA	85%	94%	92%	87%	Similar	NA	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Remain in Gaithersburg	NA	78%	87%	74%	78%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Gaithersburg employees	42%	41%	30%	35%	38%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar

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Figure 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	NA	37%	40%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	NA	75%	80%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	89%	88%	88%	89%	86%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	60%	53%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Much higher
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	NA	44%	37%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	53%	51%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	NA	79%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	NA	80%	80%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	91%	94%	85%	95%	90%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher	Higher	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	NA	70%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	NA	57%	58%	57%	55%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Purchased goods or services in Gaithersburg	NA	NA	NA	96%	95%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economy will have positive impact on income	21%	15%	28%	21%	36%	Higher	NA	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Work in Gaithersburg	NA	NA	NA	34%	37%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Similar
	Used Gaithersburg recreation centers	NA	55%	42%	60%	47%	Lower	NA	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Visited a City park	76%	83%	73%	78%	76%	Similar	NA	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	NA	90%	82%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	NA	79%	82%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	NA	60%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Used Gaithersburg public libraries	58%	NA	63%	57%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	NA	NA	41%	42%	38%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Similar	Lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	NA	55%	41%	Lower	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Lower
	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	NA	18%	18%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Gaithersburg elected officials	NA	NA	NA	13%	16%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	29%	34%	37%	36%	27%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Participated in a club	NA	NA	23%	26%	23%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	NA	NA	75%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	25%	23%	14%	18%	16%	Similar	NA	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	47%	37%	31%	36%	24%	Lower	NA	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	NA	87%	83%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Voted in local elections	53%	69%	64%	73%	63%	Lower	NA	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower